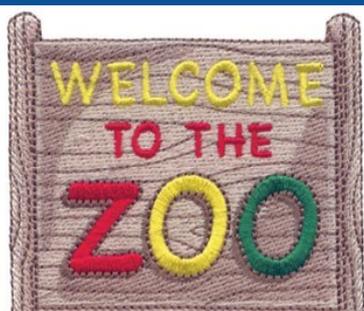




ISSUES AFFECTING CATTLE WEIGHT GAIN THIS AUTUMN

Alongside copper issues we have also seen the following problems in the last 6 weeks.

- **Low Selenium Levels**, this is no surprise as we predicted problems in past newsletters given the type of season we were experiencing. What is more surprising is that farmers allow a problem, that can be so easily corrected with an annual treatment, to occur!!
- **Ostertagia in Rising 2 year old Cattle**, this has been a little more common, earlier than usual, and is probably related to excellent conditions for worm life cycles over the summer and autumn. If you have not drenched your R2 cattle yet you may want to consider it, especially where cattle numbers and grazing intensities are higher.
- **Theileria**, continues to spread throughout the area, causing anaemia and affecting cattle performance.



I went to the zoo the other day, there was only one dog in it.

It was a Shit Zhu.

EARLY COPPER ISSUES IN CATTLE

Several clients have reported poorer than expected growth rates in cattle this autumn, given the levels of feed they have been on. When cattle have been tested very low copper levels have been found. This is probably related to the very damp growthy conditions experienced over summer and autumn. Supplementation has seen an immediate improvement in affected cattle.

Given that copper levels tend to deteriorate over winter and spring it is essential to have good copper supplementation programs in place for cattle to maximise winter and spring performance.

- For weaner cattle the use of copper capsules is generally most appropriate and should deliver 6 months copper supplementation.
- 36 gram copper capsules are a good option for cows where facilities allow

for easy administration of capsules. Supplementation should correct problems over the winter and calving period through to mating.

- Where capsules are impractical or where older stock cannot be handled, copper injections at 3-4 month intervals can be used.

Caution - if using injectable copper products take care not to over dose stock with double dosing (a client recently lost cattle from double dosing the same animals). Also ensure copper is well shaken and continue to shake during use as the copper can settle causing overdosing.

If you are uncertain of the copper status of cattle we recommend that the levels in cattle are established before supplementation, with blood tests or preferably, liver biopsy's.

BLONDE AT THE FARM

A blonde gets tired of blonde jokes, so she dyes her hair. She goes for a ride and comes across a farmer with a mob of sheep. She asks the farmer, "If I can guess the exact number of sheep in your mob, can I take one home?" The farmer accepts. The blonde guesses, "382". The farmer says, "Wow, that's correct. Pick any one you want!" She looks over the entire flock before picking one and putting it in her car. The farmer then says, "I have an offer for you. If I can guess the real colour of your hair, can I have my dog back?"

LOAN ITEM AMNESTY

As many of you are aware, we try and have equipment available for you to borrow. If you find yourself having a winter tidy up and come across any items belonging to the Club, we would appreciate their timely return to the clinic. Thanks in advance!





THIS MASTITIS YOU DON'T NEED!!

I recently attended a veterinary dairy seminar where 2 papers were presented on mastitis outbreaks in the Waikato involving a causative organism that has never really been associated with mastitis in NZ. **Prototheca** is an algal organism (not a bacteria or fungus) and as such there are no drugs to treat it, so identifying the affected cows and culling has been the only way to deal with the outbreak.

One herd had to cull 250 cows and the other 330!! The entire herds (every cow!!) were milk sampled and cultured. The cost for both herds was well over \$500,000!!!

Prototheca can survive in water, the environment, and even in the intestinal tract of animals (and obviously the udder). It is felt that poor teat health and teat sphincter lesions probably aid the organisms entry into the udder (once again reinforcing the importance of maintaining good teat health through teat spraying, emollients and good milking machine function). Poor hygiene and technique at dry cow therapy time have also been implicated as a possible factor.

The problems were identified because the farms involved were getting poor responses to antibiotic treatments for mastitis and herd somatic cell counts were rising. This reinforces the value of milk cultures in mastitis suffering cows that do not respond as expected to antibiotic treatment and immediately looking for problems when cell counts move above your normal limits.

ADEQUATE COLOSTRUM FOR CALVES

At the same dairy seminar results of a national survey on the levels of antibodies in 4 day old dairy calves from colostrum intake was presented. The facts to come out of the study were;

1. In some herds up to 80% of calves failed to get adequate colostrum protection. This was despite the fact that some farmers tubed every calf with colostrum within 24hrs of birth.
2. Every herd had calves that failed to get adequate colostrum antibody levels. The average across the survey was 35% of calves.
3. Tubing did not necessarily improve the results.

The study highlighted the importance of colostrum quality when feeding calves.

- Bacterial contamination of colostrum through poor hygiene greatly diminishes how well calves can absorb the antibodies in it. Many dairy farmers feed poor quality colostrum as a result of poor collection and storage techniques.

- The first milking of a cow supplies by far the best and most available colostrum. Very high producing cows can have poor colostrum as antibody levels are diluted by milk volume.

We would encourage all dairy farmers to consider how you collect and store colostrum and then feed your calves. If you are going to the trouble of tubing calves, ensure you have systems in place to ensure your colostrum is of the highest quality.

If you wish to check your system consider testing the antibody levels in your tank colostrum and blood test calves at 10 days of age to check the success of calf colostrum intake.

For calf rearers, who by all accounts will be very common this spring, if at all possible ensure you are purchasing calves from dairy farmers who have good colostrum feeding programs in place (and also vaccinate cows for calf scours).



WINTER DAIRY COW FACTS TO CONSIDER

Industry trials repeatedly demonstrate that a condition score 4 cow will, on average, produce 12kgs milk solids less than a condition score 5 cow and get in calf 8-10 days later.

Feed wastage figures to work on;

- In Shed 5%
- Feed Pad 10%
- Trailer/Trough Feeding 15%
- In paddock dry conditions 25%
- In paddock wet conditions 40%



"All of a sudden.....we're cool!"

AFTER HOURS VET

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Monday to Friday

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